K Computer
Inauguration on September 21, 2012

The Japanese government-funded research institution, RIKEN, in conjunction with Fujitsu, Ltd. developed the supercomputer facility, 'K Computer.' 'K' stands for the Japanese word "kei," meaning 10 quadrillion, because it is capable of performing 1 'K' calculations per second (10 petaflops).

The project to develop, manufacture, and build the K Computer complex, Advanced Institute for Computational Science (AICS), took 7 years and cost Yen 111 billion ($1.4 billion). The annual operating costs are estimated to be Yen 8 billion ($103 million) at today's prices. The Director of the AICS is Dr. Kimihiko Hirao. The English language version of the K computer brochure can be obtained at: http://www.aics.riken.jp/en/

K Computer room

The K Computer facility is the core of the Japanese government-led High Performance Computing Infrastructure (HPCI) program that connects the K Computer with the supercomputer centers of 9 Japanese universities. The facility is located on an island off Kobe where more than 200 governmental, industrial, and academic bioresearch institutions form a bio-cluster.

Abacus-shaped totem pole facing K Computer complex

Fifty percent of the operating time of the K Computer is intended to be used by 31 Japanese government-designated "strategic projects," in the fields of (1) life science, (2) new materials and energy, (3) climate change prediction, (4) next-generation manufacturing, and (5) matter and the origin of the universe. The Research Organization for Information Science and Technology (RIST) also reviews and selects projects in non-government designated areas.

Time on K Computer is available internationally. Application forms can be downloaded from K Computer website at: https://www.hpci-office.jp/invite/information.html